



Note: You may want to focus only on a spread or a specific feature of the text rather than covering this non-fiction text in its entirety.

TEXT FEATURES

- table of contents
- index
- chapters

VISUAL LITERACY

- inset photographs
- diagrams
- labels
- maps
- map key

TEXT SUPPORTS

- captions

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- guide format layout
- scientific vocabulary and descriptions
- scientific names in Latin

CANADIAN OWL GUIDE

Written by Darcy Dobell

TEXT TYPE: Non-fiction: Description—Guide
GUIDED READING LEVEL: S

SUMMARY: This guide book begins with some general characteristics of owls followed by tips when going ‘owling.’ In the second half of the guide, the sixteen different species of owl in Canada are presented. Each owl is described in detail along with an explanation of its call, habitat, and prey. A fun fact is also given for each owl.

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- analyzing

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- evaluating
- making connections: text to world, text to text

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Think-Pair-Share strategy
- Radio Show (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: recognizes and understands a wide range of compound words, and is able to chunk less familiar ones into single words, e.g., ‘Long-eared,’ ‘overhead,’ ‘pinpoint,’ ‘outstretched’
- word solving and building: uses chunking and syllabication to solve scientific vocabulary and Latin names
- language predictability: uses context and some basic strategies (such as background knowledge and rereading the sentences) to work out word meanings
- language predictability: uses dictionaries to check on word meanings

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student’s ability to:

- analyze text for facts
- connect facts to what might be previously known or thought about owls
- use information from the text to provide evidence for opinions and ideas

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Analyzing Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

First Session (pages 2–11)

Predicting and Making Connections: Text to World

Text Features

Language Predictability

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Display the front cover and read the title. Ask students: *What kind of book will this be—a story or something different? What makes you think that? What do you know about owls that might give you clues as to what the author will say? How do you expect an owl guide to be organized?*
- Begin a RAN (Reading and Analyzing Non-fiction) Organizer with the group by copying the chart below on large paper or on the chalkboard. Give students some individual time to write down what they think they know about owls; have them use a sticky note for each idea. After about 5 minutes, have students discuss their ideas with a partner and put their sticky notes in the first column of the RAN Organizer.

What I Think I Know About Owls	Confirmed	Misconceptions	New Information	Wonderings (questions)
Students state information they think is correct about the topic.	Students read to confirm prior knowledge.	Students read to confirm prior knowledge.	Students read to find additional information not stated in prior knowledge.	Students raise questions based on the new information gathered.

- As a group, students may have filled the first column up with 20 or more sticky notes before reading. After reading, students will revisit each sticky in column 1. If the idea is confirmed in the reading, the sticky is moved to column 2. If the idea proves to be false or misguided, the sticky is moved to column 3. If the idea does not come up at all in the reading, it stays in column 1.

Introduce supports and challenges

- Have students turn to the Contents page on page 3 of their books. Say, *You will be reading to page 11. What do you think you'll be learning about in this first section?*
- Point out difficult words, such as 'asymmetrical,' near the bottom of page 6, or 'regurgitates,' near the bottom of page 7. Ask, *How would you go about reading this word? What strategies would you use?* With students' guidance, solve the word and its meaning using multiple strategies, such as syllabication, context clues, reading on, and prior knowledge. Encourage students to use these strategies when they come to new scientific words in the text.

Word Solving and Building

Analyzing

- On chart paper, copy out some of the following compound words from pages 4 and 5 of the text: 'flashlight,' 'overhead,' 'rainforests,' 'grasslands,' and 'pinpoint.' Ask: *What do these words have in common? How does chunking the compound word into single words help make sense of the word?* Present these more challenging compound words from pages 6–8, and have students predict their meaning using the chunking strategy: 'wingspan,' 'outstretched,' 'wingbeats,' and 'whitewash.' Remind students to look for smaller words in large words and to use the chunking strategy.

Set a purpose for reading

- Tell students to read to see how many of the facts listed in the first column of the RAN Organizer can be moved to either the second or third columns. Also, look for new information to include in the fourth column.

ESL NOTE: Comprehending non-fiction and recalling details is much more challenging than fiction since most of the vocabulary is content based. To check for comprehension, allow students to read with a partner and have them reiterate some of the facts after each page.

Provide for early finishers

- When students finish, they can jot down new facts on sticky notes to add to the New Information column of the RAN Organizer.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Students read the text independently to the end of page 11.
- Have a student read a portion of the text aloud to you. Assist with word solving, vocabulary, and comprehension. Always provide a comprehension prompt that highlights the focus strategy (analyzing), e.g., *How many species of owl are found in Canada? What are some of the special features of owls? What does this picture show? Explain the cautions when going owling.*
- Give feedback to the student on successes and an area that may need attention.

Observe

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the *Analyzing Strategy Checklist* and the *Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record* in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*.)
- Note any successful reading strategies you observe, e.g., students looking at the picture, students re-reading for understanding.

AFTER READING

Analyzing

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Revisit each idea in the first column of the RAN Organizer. With a partner, students decide whether or not to move the sticky to columns two or three. Ask students to use information from the text to provide evidence for their decision to either leave or move the sticky. Discuss the RAN Organizer. Compare how much students knew about owls before and after the reading.
- Allow students to share any new information they learned about owls. Have students record on sticky notes and add their findings to column four.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Discuss any questions students still have. Record these on sticky notes and add them to the RAN Organizer in column five. Ask: *How could you find out the answers to your questions?*
- Review and discuss any challenges students experienced. How are students faring with the scientific terminology? Do they need further assistance with words noted previously in the plan, or any other words or concepts of difficulty?

Note successful strategy use

- Point out reading strategies you observed during the reading, e.g., *I noticed how Maya sounded out the word 'territorial' on page 9 by breaking it up into smaller chunks and syllables.* Allow other students to explain how they solved difficult words. Commend students for choosing those strategies they felt comfortable with and that worked for them.

Second Session (pages 12–32)

Making Connections: Text to Text

TEACHING TIP:

Bring in a plant guide or a travel guide to show students. Explain that, within each guide, readers will find a very consistent format for each page. Ask: *Why is each page in the guide organized the same way?* (to help the readers make comparisons and distinctions between the various plants, countries, and so on).

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Ask: *What other types of guides have you read? (i.e., movie, video game, nature guides and so on) How are these guides organized?*

**Text and Visual Literacy
Features and Inferring**

Language Predictability

Word Solving and Building

Introduce supports and challenges

- Preview the following with students:
 - The illustrated diagram of the owl on page 12. Have students look at the diagram on their own. Ask: *What is the purpose of this diagram?*
 - The Eastern Screech-Owl on page 15. Have students read the page on their own. Ask: *How is this page organized? What can help you understand the ID section?* (Refer back to the illustration on page 12.) Explain that each of the other 15 species of owl will be described in a similar manner.
- Point out difficult words such as ‘dimorphism,’ on the middle of page 13 and ‘mnemonic,’ near the top of page 14. Ask: *How would you go about reading these words? What strategies would you use?* With students’ participation, solve the words and their meanings using a print or online dictionary, or a science glossary. Ask students: *Is using a dictionary the best way of solving words like these? Would chunking or considering the context in which these words are used be a good way of figuring out what they mean?*
- Write ‘Megascops (Otus) asio’ from page 15 on a chalkboard or whiteboard. Explain that each species of owl has a common name, e.g., ‘Eastern Screech-Owl’ and a Latin name as well. Suggest that students sound out unfamiliar words one syllable at a time. Encourage students in their attempts to read these names, and tell them not to get discouraged by the challenge of reading words so unfamiliar. Say: *You’ll really be able to impress your family!*

TEACHING TIP: Scientific names, also known as Latin names, or taxonomic names, are given to animals to categorize them in a system called taxonomy. Explain to students most people don’t use these names, or even know them. They use the common names like ‘Barn Owl.’ However, sometimes common names can change from place to place, and they don’t provide much information about the animal or species. Scientists, researchers, zoologists, the staff of zoos and wildlife parks sometimes need a more exact way to identify an animal or plant. That’s why they rely on the scientific names at times. More information about the use of scientific names can be found on the Internet.

Evaluating

Set a purpose for reading

- Have students express opinions about the various species of owl and support their opinions from the text. Say: *While you’re reading about the different species of owl, choose your favourite in each of the three categories: small, medium-sized, and large.*

Provide for early finishers

- Have students revisit the guide in order to find specific information and points of interest that helped shape their opinion of their favourite three species. You might ask them individually: *What interested you in each owl that you chose? Why did you choose it as your favourite?*

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Have different students read portions of the text to you and provide them with appropriate comprehension prompts, e.g., *Can you picture this owl in your mind? Show me how big this owl might be. What does this map tell you?*

Observe

- Make observations regarding the students' ability to form and express opinions and provide a basic explanation as to what prompted them in developing their opinion.
- Encourage students to explain how they used a strategy to help in solving new or difficult words, e.g., using a dictionary or reference tool, chunking words into parts, or using context to assist them with meaning. Ask: *Does the map key help you in using the maps?*

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- In a Think-Pair-Share activity (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*) instruct your students: *Take turns telling your partner your favourite species of owl in each section. Explain why you chose them as your favourites. The more you explain your opinion, the better your partner will understand your choice.*

Check on outstanding challenges

- Your observations will help you work out other challenges students experienced. Is the guide format challenging for students? Is this their first exposure to this kind of text? What strategies and text features can students use to help them gain an understanding of what they have read?

Evaluating

Note successful strategy use

- Ask students to describe strategies they used to understand the 'ID' sections of the guide. Begin by giving an example: *On page 21, Joel was pausing after each point in the ID list. He told me that he was visualizing the owl before he moved on to the next point in the list.*

FOCUSED REREADING

Three options are provided for focused rereading in the next Guided Reading lesson. Choose an activity that meets the needs of your students, or you might select a Reader Response activity from the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*.

Written

Analyzing

- Using the content found in pages 4–14, have students create a quiz with at least 10 multiple choice or true/false questions. Remind students to review their questions and make sure they are suitable and relevant to the quiz. They should ask themselves: *What do we want our friends to know and learn?* Have students in the class answer the quiz. An example of a quiz can be seen below:

Test Your Knowledge of Owls!

1. Owls are not found in:
 - a) Canada
 - b) United States
 - c) Antarctica
 - d) Mexico
2. Owls can move their eyeballs.
 - a) True
 - b) False

Artistic

Analyzing

- Have students create a poster explaining how to be an expert owler. Suggest that students incorporate many of the ideas on pages 10, 11, and 31 into images or quotes on the poster. Encourage students to use engaging as well as useful text and visual features. For example, labels such as binoculars, flashlight, and warm clothes could point to items on the expert owler illustrated on the poster. Encourage students to come up with their own unique interpretations of what this poster might look like and what information it will impart.

**Making Connections:
Text to World**

Oral/dramatic

- The following Radio Show (see the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*) can be used as an activity to practise fluency in reading. In pairs, one student is the interviewer or host, the other takes the role of one of the owls on pages 15–30 (additional information about the owls can be found on the Internet). Together, the pair develops a script with a series of questions for the interviewer to ask his/her ‘guest owl,’ along with the owl’s responses. They can tape-record and present their radio show to the other students. Below are some suggestions to model for students:

Interviewer/Host: *Welcome to our show, ‘Canada’s Wildlife.’ Today we are meeting one of Canada’s famous large owls, Bubo virginianus. Hello, Bubo. What do your friends call you?*

Great Horned Owl: *Thank you very much, I’m delighted to be here. Only my parents call me Bubo, my friends call me Great Horned.*

Interviewer/Host: *Well, Great Horned, tell us where you grew up.*

Great Horned Owl: *I grew up in a forest in Ontario. Great Horned Owls live across Canada and can be found in forests, fields, marshes, tundra, and even cities.*

Interviewer/Host: *Describe your favourite meal...*